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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Committee on Science and Technology
Fifth session
Geneva, 2-4 October 2001
Item 8 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Provisional agenda and annotations

Note by the secretariat

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I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. The provisional agenda presented for adoption is as follows:

1. Opening of the session.

2. Election of Vice-Chairs.

3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.

4. Review of the guide to assist Parties in preparing their national reports under the Convention.

5. Benchmarks and indicators.

6. Survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies.

7. Traditional knowledge.

8. Early warning systems.

9. Work programme of the Committee on Science and Technology.

10. Enhancing the usefulness and effectiveness of the Committee on Science and Technology.

11. Roster of independent experts.

12. Future work programme of the Committee on Science and Technology.

13. Establishment, if necessary, of an ad hoc panel or panels.

14. Other matters.

15. Report on the session.

II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Introduction

2. In accordance with paragraph 7 of the terms of reference of the Committee on Science and Technology, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its first session (29 September-10 October 1997) in decision 15/COP.1, the Committee shall adopt a programme of work, which should include estimates regarding its financial implications. The programme of work shall be subject to approval by the Conference of the Parties.

Venue

3. Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Convention to Combat Desertification provides that the Committee on Science and Technology shall meet in conjunction with the ordinary sessions of the Conference of the Parties. The fifth session of the Committee will therefore meet at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, during the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties. Tentatively, the Committee has been scheduled to meet from 2 to 4 October 2001, with a possible extension to 5 October 2001.

Participants

4. Article 24, paragraph 1, of the Convention provides that the Committee shall be multidisciplinary and open to the participation of all Parties. Consistent with the provisions of article 22, paragraph 7, it is anticipated that sessions of the Committee will also be open to observers in accordance with the rules of procedure.

Documentation

5. Lists of the documents prepared for the Committee's fourth and fifth sessions are contained in annex I. In addition to normal distribution, documents will be made available on the secretariat's Web site: http://www.unccd.int.

1. Opening of the session

6. In accordance with rule 22 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties (decision 1/COP.1 of 10 October 1997, as amended by decision 20/COP.2 of 11 December 1998), the Chair of the Committee shall be elected by the Conference from among the representatives of the Parties present at the session, in such a manner that every geographical region is fairly represented. This will occur at the opening meeting of the Conference on 1 October 2001. The fifth session of the Committee will then be opened on 2 October 2001 by the Chair of the Committee.

2. Election of Vice-Chairs

7. In accordance with paragraph 6 of the terms of reference of the Committee, the Committee shall elect its own Vice-Chairs, one of whom shall act as Rapporteur. Paragraph 6 of the terms of reference provides that the Chair and the Vice-Chairs shall be elected with due regard to the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution and adequate representation of affected country Parties, particularly those in Africa, and shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms.

3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

8. The Committee will have before it for adoption the provisional agenda contained in paragraph 1 above, prepared by the secretariat on the basis of decision 16/COP.4 of 22 December 2000. A tentative schedule of work is to be found in annex II.

New recommendations

9. Provision has been made in the Committee's schedule of work for the drafting of a report on the work of the Committee during the morning of 4 October 2001, and for approving it in the afternoon of the same day. Any new recommendations could also be dealt with at the plenary meeting of the Conference on 5 October 2001.

4. Review of the guide to assist Parties in preparing their national reports under the Convention

10. By decision 10/COP.4 of 22 December 2000, the Conference recalled its decisions 11/COP.1 of 10 October 1997 and 6/COP.3 of 26 November 1999 to establish an ad hoc working group to review and analyse, at its fourth session, national reports submitted by Parties, in order to draw conclusions and propose specific recommendations on further steps in the implementation of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties took note of the synthesis of scientific and technical information, particularly with regard to benchmarks and indicators used to measure progress, contained in document ICCD/COP(4)/CST/5.

11. The Conference of the Parties also took note of the concern expressed by representatives of the Committee on Science and Technology at its fourth session regarding the lack of information on scientific and technological information, particularly benchmarks and indicators, contained in the national reports submitted by Parties.

12. The Conference invited Parties and other countries in a position to provide assistance, as well as international organizations, to mobilize technical, scientific and financial support for the affected country Parties, and to initiate the testing of impact indicators, particularly at the national level.

13. The Conference encouraged Parties to include information in the national report on the scientific and technical activities to combat desertification undertaken at all levels, and to ensure the better integration of the activities of the scientific and technical community into the implementation of the Convention, and invited them to include in their national reports the progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Science and Technology.

14. The Conference requested the secretariat to revise the guide in question, based on the issues expressed in the above paragraph, with the aim of providing guidance to Parties in better reflecting the activities of the scientific and technical communities and institutions in their national reports. Document ICCD/COP(5)/CST/5 accordingly contains proposals on how to revise the national reports help guide.

5. Benchmarks and indicators

15. By its decision 11/COP.4 of 22 December 2000, the Conference of the Parties took note of the important progress achieved on benchmarks and indicators by the Permanent Inter-State

Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) in Africa and by Parties in the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries and in other regions.

16. Having also taken note of the proposal of CILSS and OSS on the development of benchmarks and indicators, the Conference requested CILSS and OSS to report on progress in this initiative to the Committee on Science and Technology at its fifth session.

6. Survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies

17. In its decision 13/COP.4 of 22 December 2000, the Conference noted that it had reviewed the final report on phase one of the survey and evaluation submitted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on behalf of the consortium of agencies undertaking that phase.

18. The Conference also noted that it had reviewed the relevant documents prepared for the Committee on Science and Technology at its fourth session, including the terms of reference for phase two of the survey and evaluation, to be carried out in the southern African subregion, and the proposal submitted by UNEP on behalf of its consortium members.

19. Bearing in mind the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology on this subject, the Conference accepted the proposal put forward by UNEP on behalf of its consortium members. The proposal may be found in document ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3/Add.1.

20. By the same decision, the Conference requested the secretariat to enter into the necessary contractual arrangements with UNEP for the implementation of phase two of the survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies. The interim report by UNEP, issued under the symbol ICCD/COP(5)/CST/3, is submitted for consideration.

7. Traditional knowledge

21. By decision 12/COP.4, the Conference noted the report of the Ad Hoc Panel on Traditional Knowledge and the recommendations of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology on the issue of traditional knowledge.

22. The Conference also noted that the Italian authorities were in the process of establishing an international research centre on traditional knowledge at Matera, Italy. It invited the Italian authorities to present a proposal for the realization of a pilot project of a network of institutions, bodies and experts on traditional knowledge, taking due account of the observations made by the

Committee on Science and Technology on the issue at its fourth session. The proposal by the Italian Government may be found in document ICCD/COP(5)/CST/2 and the observations by the Bureau of the Committee in document ICCD/COP(5)/CST/2/Add.1.

23. The Committee is invited to consider these two reports and to adopt any recommendation to the Conference of the Parties that it deem appropriate.

8. Early warning systems

24. By its decision 14/COP.4 of 22 December 2000, the Conference of the Parties reappointed the ad hoc panel of 10 experts with the terms of reference set forth in paragraph 1 of the decision.

25. The Conference also requested the secretariat to make the necessary arrangements for the functioning of the ad hoc panel, including the provision of additional expertise, particularly in the area of participatory planning and legal advice.

26. The ad hoc panel of 10 experts held a meeting with other experts in the area of participatory planning and legal advice at Fuji-Yoshida, Japan, from 4 to 8 June 2001.

27. The Committee will have before it the report of the ad hoc panel, contained in document ICCD/COP(5)/CST/4; it is invited to consider the report and to adopt any recommendation to the Conference of the Parties that it deem appropriate.

9. Work programme of the Committee on Science and Technology

28. In its decision 16/COP.4 of 22 December 2000, the Conference of the Parties decided that, at its fifth session, the Committee on Science and Technology would study the issue of strategies for the communication of information and its use to generate best practices for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought. The Conference invited Parties and observers to contribute, in writing, case studies illustrating the communication of best practices related to the above theme, which were not to exceed 10 pages in length and were to be transmitted to the secretariat no later than 30 June 2001.

29. A synthesis of these studies has been prepared by the secretariat and may be found in document ICCD/COP(5)/CST/6.

10. Enhancing the usefulness and effectiveness of the Committee on Science and Technology

30. In its decision 17/COP.4 of 22 December 2000, the Conference of the Parties took note of the observations and recommendations of the Committee on Science and Technology during its fourth session and encouraged the Parties to hold extensive consultations on ways of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Committee on Science and Technology and to transmit their recommendations, which were not to exceed five pages in length, to the secretariat by 1 May 2001.

31. Pursuant to that decision, the secretariat prepared a summary of the recommendations received from Parties and organized a consultation on this issue by the regional groups, on 16 and 17 August 2001 in Geneva. Document ICCD/COP(5)/3/Add.2, containing the outcome of that consultation, is submitted to the Conference of the Parties for its consideration at its fifth session.

11. Roster of independent experts

32. Under the provisions of article 24, paragraph 2 of the Convention, the Conference is to establish and maintain a roster of independent experts with expertise and experience in the relevant fields. In accordance with decision 15/COP.4 of 22 December 2000, the secretariat has kept the roster up to date and its latest version may be found in documents ICCD/COP(5)/5 and Add.1 (in English only). The Committee may wish to review the roster, and make recommendations to the Conference regarding its composition and any guidance the Conference may wish to give to the secretariat as to its appropriate format.

12. Future work programme of the Committee

33. The Committee may wish to consider what recommendation to give to the Conference with respect to the future work programme of the Committee, and may also wish to make recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the Committee in carrying out its responsibilities outlined in its terms of reference during the inter-sessional period.

13. Establishment, if necessary, of an ad hoc panel or panels

34. Under the provisions of article 24, paragraph 3, of the Convention, the Conference may, as necessary, appoint ad hoc panels to provide it, through the Committee, with information and advice on specific issues regarding the state of the art in relevant fields of science and technology. The Committee may wish to consider recommending to the Conference the establishment of any ad hoc panels which may be required.

14. Other matters

35. The Committee may wish to consider recommending to the Conference whether and how any other inter-sessional work in the domain of science and technology should be undertaken.

15. Report on the session

36. A draft report on the session will be prepared for adoption at the final meeting on the understanding that it will be completed after the session, with the assistance of the secretariat and under the guidance of the Chair.

Annex I

LIST OF DOCUMENTS PREPARED FOR THE FOURTH AND FIFTH SESSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Fifth session

ICCD/COP(5)/CST/1	Provisional agenda and annotations
ICCD/COP(5)/CST/2	Traditional knowledge - Proposal of the Government of Italy for the realization of a pilot project for a network of institutions, bodies and experts on traditional knowledge
ICCD/COP(5)/CST/2/Add.1	Traditional knowledge - Proposal of the Government of Italy for the realization of a pilot project for a network of institutions, bodies and experts on traditional knowledge - Addendum - Report of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology
ICCD/COP(5)/CST/3	Survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies - Interim report from UNEP on phase two
ICCD/COP(5)/CST/4	Early warning systems - Report by the ad hoc panel
ICCD/COP(5)/CST/5	Proposals on how to revise the UNCCD National Reports Help Guide, with the aim of providing guidance to Parties to better reflect the activities of the scientific communities and institutions in their national reports
ICCD/COP(5)/CST/6	Strategies for the communication of information and its use to generate best practices for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought
ICCD/COP(5)/CST/7	Benchmarks and indicators - Report of CILSS and OSS on their initiative on the development of benchmarks and indicators
ICCD/COP(5)/INF.6	Report of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology
ICCD/COP(5)/INF.7	Assessment of the status of land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas (LADA and MEA)
ICCD/COP(5)/3/Add.2	Implementation of the Convention - Synthesis of the report on ways of improving the efficiency and the effectiveness of the Committee on Science and Technology
ICCD/COP(5)/5 and Add.1	Maintenance of the roster of experts

Fourth session

ICCD/COP(4)/CST/1	Provisional agenda and annotations
ICCD/COP(4)/CST/2	Traditional knowledge - Report of the ad hoc panel
ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3	Survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies
ICCD/COP(4)/CST/3/Add.1	Survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies (submission from UNEP)
ICCD/COP(4)/CST/4	Early warning systems - Report of the ad hoc panel
ICCD/COP(4)/CST/5 and Corr.1	Synthesis of scientific and technical information contained in the reports from country Parties, in particular on benchmarks and indicators, for review by the CST
ICCD/COP(4)/5 and Add.1	Maintenance of the roster of experts
ICCD/COP(4)/INF.6	Dryland degradation assessment and the millennium ecosystem assessment
ICCD/COP(4)/INF.7	Report of the Bureau of the Committee on Science and Technology

Annex II

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF WORK FOR THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Tuesday, 2 October 2001	
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	**3 p.m.-6 p.m.**
- Organization of work (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/1) - Establishment of a roster of experts (ICCD/COP(5)/5 and Add.1) - Survey and evaluation of networks (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/3) - Report of the Bureau of CST (ICCD/COP(5)/INF.6)	- Benchmarks and indicators - Report of CILSS and OSS (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/7) - Improving the efficiency and the effectiveness of CST (ICCD/COP(5)/3/Add.2)
Wednesday, 3 October 2001	
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	**3 p.m.-6 p.m.**
- Traditional knowledge (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/2) - Report of the Bureau of CST on traditional knowledge (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/2/Add.1) - Proposals on how to revise the national reports help guide (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/5)	- Early warning systems (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/4) - Dryland degradation assessment and the millennium ecosystem assessment (ICCD/COP(5)/INF.7) - Synthesis of strategies for the communication of information and its use to generate best practices for combating desertification (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/6)
Thursday, 4 October 2001	
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	**3 p.m.-6 p.m.**
- Establishment of ad hoc panel(s) - Drafting of the report to the Conference of the Parties	- Programme of work for the Committee - Adoption of recommendations to the Conference of the Parties
Friday, 5 October 2001	
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	**3 p.m.-6 p.m.**
To be determined	-